

**Middle East Business Forum
World Trade Center
Baltimore, MD
November 29, 2004**

- 8:00 Registration & Continental Breakfast**
- 8:30 Opening Remarks**
- 9:00 Middle East Regional Business Outlook**
DAS Holly Vineyard, Office of Middle East, US Dept. of Commerce
Nancy Charles-Parker, USFCS Saudi Arabia
Amer Kayani, USFCS Turkey
Clement Miller, M&T Bank, Vice President, International Trade Finance
Moderated Q & A panel
- 10:30 Break**
- 10:45 Iraq / Afghanistan Reconstruction Overview**
Jay Brandes, Iraq /Afghanistan Task Force, US Dept. of Commerce
Jo Morrison, Trade Bank of Iraq / JPMorganChase
Kenneth Kurtz, CEO, The Steele Foundation,
Dana Ball, Assistant Vice President, AIG World Source
Mercedes Fitchett, USFCS Iraq
Moderated Q & A panel
- 12:30 Lunch & Keynote Speaker**
Her Excellency Rend Al-Rahim, Iraqi Representative to the United States
- 2:00 – 3:30 Executive Briefings**
John DeBlasio, Principal, Sallyport Global Holdings
Kenneth Kurtz, CEO, The Steele Foundation
Chris Exline, President, Home Essentials
Col. Frank Duggan (ret. USMC), Iraq Country Director, Diligence Middle East
Moderated Q & A panel
- 3:30 - 5:00 Networking Reception**

Keynote Speaker

**Her Excellency Rend Al-Rahim
Iraqi Representative to the USA**

Rend Al-Rahim was raised in Iraq and received her education in Europe. She left Iraq with her family in 1978 and settled in the United States in 1981. From 1974 until 1991, she worked as an international banker and in the private investment field in Europe, the Middle East, and the United States.

In 1991 Ms. Al-Rahim, along with other Iraqi expatriates, co-founded the Iraq Foundation, a non-profit organization for the promotion of democracy and human rights in Iraq. She worked as the executive director of the Iraq Foundation from October 1991 to November 2003. In November 2003, she was appointed by the Iraqi Governing Council as the Iraqi Representative to the USA.

Ms. Al-Rahim has published a number of articles on Iraq, and has also contributed to several books and other publications dealing with Iraq affairs. She is the co-author of *The Arab Shi'a*, published in 2000.

She has testified before Congressional Committees and participated as analyst on Iraq on national television and radio programs.

Ms. Al-Rahim holds degrees from the Universities of Cambridge and the Sorbonne.

Speakers

Jay Brandes

Director

Iraq and Afghanistan Investment & Reconstruction Task Forces

U.S. Department of Commerce

Jay Brandes is currently serving as Director of the Iraq Investment and Reconstruction Task Force and also the Afghanistan Investment and Reconstruction Task Force within the International Trade Administration of the U.S. Department of Commerce. The Task Forces were established to help companies participate in the rebuilding of Iraq and Afghanistan.

Prior to his role with the Task Forces, Mr. Brandes was Acting Director of the U.S. Department of Commerce's Advocacy Center, the main point of contact for U.S. firms bidding on foreign government procurements seeking U.S. Government assistance. The Center leads the charge in the fight to level the playing field and promotes open competition in the international bidding arena, from a multimillion-dollar infrastructure project to a strategic contract for a small business.

Mr. Brandes has also served as an industry analyst and in the Major Projects Division at the U.S. Department of Commerce, supporting U.S. companies pursuing major projects overseas in petrochemicals, chemicals, oil & gas, pipelines, mining, shipbuilding, minerals and metals, environmental technologies and the building products sectors. Additionally, for several years as an industry analyst at the U.S. Tariff Commission (U.S. International Trade Commission), he analyzed the impact imports have on industry.

Mr. Brandes received his Bachelor of Arts degree in Economics from Queens College in New York.

Nancy Charles-Parker

Senior Commercial Officer

US Commercial Service – Saudi Arabia

US Department of Commerce

Nancy Charles-Parker assumed responsibility as the Counselor for Commercial Affairs in Riyadh Saudi Arabia in August 2004. Prior to that, Ms Parker was the Commercial Counselor at the U.S Embassy in Abu Dhabi between 2000-2004. During this time she and her Commercial team in Abu Dhabi and Dubai have facilitated \$6.5 billion in export sales to the UAE.

John DeBlasio

Principal

Sallyport Global Holdings

Sallyport Global Holdings, LLC is a unique company that was created specifically with the aim of assisting U.S. and foreign businesses to evaluate and take advantage of continually evolving business opportunities in the Middle East. Its Principals have years of military, government contracting, public policy and international sales experience

Mr. DeBlasio recently completed a 14-month deployment to the Middle East where he worked with the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA) as an Advisor to the Ministry of Trade and with the US Embassy in Amman Jordan where he worked as the CPA Liaison for the embassy. He is a senior manager with more than fifteen years experience, seven of which involved direct international experience working to progress US policy goals or develop international business in the private sector. He has lived abroad for extended periods in Asia, Europe, and the Middle East while working for General Electric, Philip Morris, META Group and the US Army.

John brings excellent experience around government and corporate policy makers as well as experience with a range of high tech, financial, and industrial products and services. He is a 1989 West Point graduate and a 1994 graduate of the Master of International Business Studies program at the University of South Carolina. He speaks German fluently, holds an active Secret security clearance and is currently a Major in the US Army Reserve Civil Affairs branch.

Frank Duggan
Country Director Iraq
Diligence Middle East

Retired U.S. Marine infantry Colonel with fifteen of thirty years assigned or deployed overseas. Some of his unique assignments included advisory duty with the Royal Thai Marine Corps, Joint U.S. Military Advisory Group, Bangkok Thailand; Command of the Marine Security Guards, Sub-Sahara and Eastern Africa; Director, Coalition and Special Warfare Division, Marine Corps Combat Development Command, and numerous assignments within the Special Operations and Low Intensity Conflict arena, both as an operator and within plans and policy. Upon retirement from the Marine Corps, he took the position as Vice President, International Business Director for a world leading health and fitness magazine publisher (Joe Weider), Weider Publications Inc., New York City. Before joining Diligence Middle East he was a Research Fellow with the Potomac Institute for Policy Studies, Washington D.C, and served as Head, Plans and Operations for the Expeditionary Warfare Operations and Technology Division, Office of Naval Research.

Chris Exline
President
Home Essentials

Chris Exline is founder and president of Home Essentials, the largest furniture rental company outside the US, and is one of the first US entrepreneurs to set up operations in post-war Iraq. Home Essentials was created in 1997 to assist foreign companies and developers provide furnishing solutions for expatriates. Since then, Home Essentials has expanded to multiple markets from Hong Kong, Singapore, Tokyo, Kuala Lumpur, and others working with thousands of families each year.

In 2003, Chris saw another opportunity for his company to make a difference in a new market and “do something good” at the same time. Deciding to help meet the post-war challenges in Iraq, Home Essentials offers a comprehensive turnkey service to foreign business owners and expatriate workers in Iraq. These services include short-term and long-term leasing arrangements of housing and office furniture, wholesale furniture trading, provisions for extended stay housing, cleaning and other essential services.

Home Essentials successful Iraqi venture has been the subject of several magazine and television news articles, including features in Entrepreneur, Inc., and Fortune Small Business. He has also been a featured speaker at many international conferences on doing business successfully in Iraq.

Mercedes Carmela Fitchett
U.S. Commercial Service
US Department Of Commerce

From March 2004 through October 2004, Mercedes served as a U.S. Commercial Officer in Baghdad, Iraq under the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA). For her service in Baghdad, the CPA awarded Mercedes the Joint Civilian Service Commendation Award: the highest-ranking joint civilian service award under the approval authority of the Administrator, CPA – formerly Ambassador Bremer. She also received the Gold Medal from the Dept. of Commerce, its highest form of honorary recognition. Prior to her Baghdad assignment, Mercedes was a member of the Dept. of Commerce International Trade Administration’s Iraq Investment and Reconstruction Task Force for approximately 9 months.

Previous assignments include serving as a Trade Advisor to the U.S. Executive Director of the World Bank, Carole Brookins; as a Trade Negotiator for the Free Trade Area of the Americas and the North American

Free Trade Agreement; and as a Program Manager for the U.S. Commercial Service where she ran a program conducting team assessments of the U.S. Commercial Service network that include 105 domestic and 180 overseas offices that promote U.S. exports. Through the U.S. Government Women's Executive Leadership Program, Mercedes worked at Nike's world headquarters for four months on the company's trade and sustainability initiative, and as a Trade Legislative Fellow to the U.S. Senate Finance Committee.

She completed her Master of Science in Foreign Service at Georgetown University, and post-graduate studies in Paris at the l'Institut d'Etudes Politiques. She is a Board Member of the Washington Tennis & Education Foundation, and is co-chair of the Council on Foreign Relations Term Member Advisory Committee in Washington, DC.

Amer M. Kayani
Senior Commercial Officer
US Commercial Service – Turkey
US Department of Commerce

Amer Kayani is currently the Senior Commercial Officer in Turkey where he is responsible for overseeing commercial operations in Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan. Prior to his posting in Turkey, Mr. Kayani served as the Senior Commercial Officer at the U.S. Embassy in Islamabad, Pakistan. Before his assignment to Pakistan, Mr. Kayani served as Director at the U.S. Department of Commerce's office in Hawaii. Prior to that, Mr. Kayani served as Commercial Attaché in Israel. In addition, he has served in various positions at the Department of Commerce in Washington, D.C.

Kenneth Kurtz,
Chairman and Chief Executive Officer
The Steele Foundation

Mr. Kurtz is the Chairman and Chief Executive Officer for The Steele Foundation, the world's fastest growing risk management company. Under Mr. Kurtz's leadership, The Steele Foundation's mission has been to continually advance and improve the standards within the security and safety industry, and to deliver responsive, quality, and more cost-effective services.

Mr. Kurtz joined The Steele Foundation in 1994, advancing through a series of leadership positions in the company's Business Intelligence Practice with recognized expertise in strategic planning, competitive intelligence, partnerships, and business acquisitions and mergers. In 1997 Mr. Kurtz was named a Managing Director and Vice President of the corporation and was promoted to Executive Vice-President of Corporate Affairs in January 1999.

During his tenure as EVP of Corporate Affairs Mr. Kurtz was responsible for launching major expansion initiatives in the Middle East, Asia, and Latin America. Steele is now regarded as industry leaders in China, Mexico and Saudi Arabia. As an innovator and leader in the private sector, Mr. Kurtz has opened new chapters on the risk management frontier by successfully privatizing presidential level high-risk protective operations in Latin America, Europe, and the Caribbean.

Mr. Kurtz was elected to The Steele Foundation's Board of Directors in 1999 and relocated to Europe in 2001 as President of Steele-Europe. After serving as President of Steele-Europe, he was elected Chairman of Steele International, the parent company of The Steele Foundation, and in January 2004, he took the helm of the world's fastest growing risk management company as Chief Executive Officer of The Steele Foundation.

Mr. Kurtz lectures to multi-cultural corporations and has been the keynote speaker on several topics, including international crisis management and business investigations at various conference events around the world. He has served as a Security Consultant for numerous think tank conferences and has consulted on the topic of risk management to prominent social, government, and business leaders.

Jo Morrison
Vice President
Trade Products Management
JPMorgan Chase Bank

Jo Morrison is a senior international banker with background dedicated to international finance. She has over 30 years experience in financing trade. Jo has worked with multinationals, small and medium sized companies and debt burdened countries and emerging markets. She is experienced in using risk mitigation techniques including Eximbank, foreign ECA's, and private insurance as well as distribution. Currently, Jo is involved in establishing the Trade Bank of Iraq for which JPMorgan was awarded the mandate.

The Trade Bank of Iraq was established in July 2003 under the Coalition Provisional Authority order number 20, to serve as a credit-worthy trade finance bank for Iraq's international trade. TBI has issued US\$ 2 billion of letters of credit to over 50 countries.

Clement Miller
Vice President of International Trade Finance
M&T Bank

Clement K. Miller is Vice President of International Trade Finance at M&T Bank. Before his 2 years with M&T Bank, Mr. Miller served 15 years with the Export-Import Bank of the United States. During his Ex-Im tenure, Mr. Miller was a country economist, loan officer, trade finance negotiator, and loan recoveries manager. Mr. Miller has extensive experience in emerging markets, including Algeria, Bosnia, Croatia, Dominican Republic, Guatemala, Jamaica, Egypt, Iraq, Mexico, Morocco, Russia, Serbia, Slovenia, Tunisia, Turkey, and Venezuela, among others.

Mr. Miller holds a B.S. from Georgetown University's School of Foreign Service and an M.B.A from George Washington University; he is also a Chartered Financial Analyst (CFA).

Holly Vineyard
Deputy Assistant Secretary for Africa, the Middle East, and South Asia
US Department of Commerce

Holly Vineyard serves as the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Africa, the Middle East, and South Asia in the International Trade Administration's Market Access and Compliance unit. In this position, she directs the Department's regional activities on market access, trade, commerce and compliance with international trade agreements. She is responsible for developing programs, policies and strategies to strengthen the United States' commercial position in over 80 countries throughout Africa, the Near East, South Asia and Oceania.

Ms. Vineyard joined the Commerce Department in 1994. Prior to her current position, Ms. Vineyard served as the Director of the Office of Africa, as Senior Policy Advisor to the Under Secretary of Commerce for International Trade, and as a desk officer in the Office of South Asia and Oceania. She has been detailed twice to the Senate Finance Committee, where she worked with the Trade Subcommittee on a wide range of issues, including its consideration of the African Growth and Opportunity Act. Prior to joining the Commerce Department, Ms. Vineyard worked in the private sector.

She holds a master's degree from George Mason University and a bachelor's degree from the College of William and Mary.